UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/920
S/1998/447
1 June 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Agenda items 10, 81 and 111
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 29 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose the text of a letter addressed to you by Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif on the subject of the recent developments in South Asia.

I would request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as an official document of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly under agenda items 10, 81 and 111, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad KAMAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 28 May 1998 from the Prime Minister of Pakistan addressed to the Secretary-General

I had on 23 May 1998 drawn your attention to the extremely grave situation prevailing in our region and the magnitude of the threat posed to our security.

We had also maintained close contact with the United Nations to underscore our security concerns resulting from nuclear weaponization by India. As advised by you, we pondered hard and deliberated carefully on our dire security predicament. Determined to act with utmost responsibility, despite grave provocations, we also closely evaluated the international reaction, which regrettably did not factor in the threat to our security and to regional peace and stability.

We regret that the United Nations did not take appropriate cognizance of the impending breach of peace in our region. The statement by the President of the Security Council dated 14 May 1998 (S/PRST/1998/12) focused mainly on global non-proliferation issues and failed to address the security situation in our region. As you know, Pakistan took the lead at the United Nations in proposing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This proposal was repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly. We also cooperated with international efforts at the Conference on Disarmament to promote equitable and non-discriminatory measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. To India, we offered several proposals to prevent the nuclearization of South Asia. For more than 20 years Pakistan advocated, in all earnestness, the goal of nuclear non-proliferation. We repeatedly drew the attention of the international community to the serious consequences that would ensue from overt nuclear weaponization by India. Regrettably, our warnings went unheeded. The evident selectivity in the pursuit of the global non-proliferation goals, without any regard to the underlying security problems that impel proliferation, had incensed our people.

At this critical juncture at which our very life and existence are at stake, the people of Pakistan were unanimous in demanding that we seek to rectify the strategic imbalance resulting from nuclear weaponization by India.

We have, therefore, in our supreme national interest, decided to exercise the nuclear option. This decision was necessitated by the imperatives of self-defence and the need to deter aggression against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of our country.

We are mindful of the need for urgent steps to bring about nuclear stabilization between Pakistan and India. I have, therefore, offered to discuss all aspects of the security situation prevailing in the region with India as an integral part of our bilateral dialogue.

We trust that you will encourage and facilitate not only the resumption of the Pakistan-India talks but also the early conclusion of mutually acceptable restraints, accompanied by confidence-enhancing measures.

We would also urge you to endorse and support fully our proposal for a non-aggression pact between Pakistan and India, on the basis of a just settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Mohammad Nawaz SHARIF
Prime Minister of Pakistan